SANSKRIT DRAMA IN MITHILĀ*

(*An historical Survey*)

By

Professor Radhakrishna Choudhary

Mithilā is the only part of India where Sanskrit learning continued unabated till the last quarter of the 19th century and where Sanskrit continued to be the official language of the court.[1] Since the beginning of the early medieval period, Mithilā came to be known as a centre of new school of philosophy and it was here that the Buddhists met their pungent critics. Such critical studies ultimately led to the development of the *Navya-nyāya* system of philosophy, which, though born in Mithilā, got its garb in Bengal. Another important contribution was in the domain of the *Dharmaśāstra* literature. Along with these developments, Sanskrit literature also marched forward in its different branches in which drama or the *nāṭaka* was the most conspicuous. A critical study of the history of Sanskrit literature in Mithilā reveals to us that no positive work, in this respect, has yet been done. *Kāvya*, *nāṭaka* and other aspects of Sanskrit literature in Mithilā remain untapped and there is a vast scope of work in this field where scholars can dive deep with pleasure and profit.[2]

Since no positive work, in this field, has been done as yet, the present paper attempts to present an exploratory account of Sanskrit drama in Mithilā. Sanskrit drama is one of the chief aspects of Sanskrit literature. According to Bharata, drama shall be a comfort, an amusement, and a refreshment to all those that are grieved. Kālidāsa says—"Drama....is an entertainment common to people of different tastes."[3] Bhavabhūti stands for sense and dignity in the drama.[4] Dhanañjaya calls dramatic representations as the pure expressions of joy.[5] Bharata is of opinion that

* In the preparation of this short dissertation, I have received sufficient help from my erstwhile student, Śrī Umākānt Ṭhākur, M.A., who spared no pains to go through some of the unpublished *mss.* and collect materials for me. Some of the important Sanskrit Dramas of Mithilā are yet to be published. Cf. my article—"*Kṛṣṇadatta Māithila and his works*"—in *JBRS*, XLII, Pt 2.

[1] The discovery of a judgment in Sanskrit bears testimony to this fact.

[2] For Mithilā's contributions to different aspects of Sanskrit literature—*cf.* Jyotiṣāchārya Pt. Baladeva Miśra's article in *Rāmcharitra Abhinandan Grantha*.

[3] *Mālavikāgnimitram*—1.4.

[4] *Mālatīmādhava*—1.6

[5] *Daśarūpaka*—1.6.

all activities are to be represented in a drama. The introduction of *Prākṛta* in Sanskrit drama marked the beginning of the introduction of spoken languages in the literary dramas of great authors. Bharata sponsored this idea by pointing out that "in a play staged, composition should be based on the local dialects."[1] Since drama was a representation of human life in all its aspects, Dhanañjaya suggested that in all the productions, dress, action, and speech should be taken directly from the society and should be properly observed. Through drama, literature was democratised to a great extent. Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* came to be recognised as a fifth *Veda.* Since scholarship, in ancient times, became the sole monopoly of pedantic scholars, interested in hair-splitting arguments, Brahmā created drama for the Śūdras. Nahuṣa is spoken of as the first patron of drama.[2] The non-sacrificing name of Nahuṣa speaks of the anti-Vedic origin of the drama. It is a non-vedic development. Nahuṣa's quarrels with gods and Brāhmaṇas are handed down to us in a legendary lore. The drama, probably, originated after the epics and represented peoples' culture in a majority of cases.[3] Drama is the natural exponent of higher form of fine art.

Nānyadeva, also known as Abhinavagupta, king of Mithilā (1097-1147 A.D.), was one of the greatest writers on dramaturgy.[4] K. C. Panday's identification[5] does not stand in the light of modern researches. There has been only one Nānyadeva, who was the king of Mithilā. He wrote an exhaustive commentary on Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra.* He emphasised that spectators' state of mind must be considered. Keith says—"It is in him (the spectator) that from the experience of life there comes into being emotional complexes, which lie dormant, ready to be called into activity by the reading of poems or by seeing plays performed."[6] According to Abhinavagupta, a dominant feeling or emotion becomes a sentiment when it is transformed into an object of enjoyment. He has prescribed a greater variety of forms in so far as the question of *Nāndi* or benediction is concerned. The sentiment of love, heroism, horror and fury are taken as primary and brought into connections with mental condition described as *druti* (melting), *vistāra* (expansion) and *vikāsa* (unfolding). He does not accept *kṣobha* (agitation) and *vikṣepa* (movement to and fro) in this connection. In almost all the editions of Bharata's work, there is an enumeration of only *eight Rasas,* excluding the ninth, *i.e.*, the *śānta rasa.* In the *GOS* edition, we find that the text on the *Śānta rasa* occurs at the end of chapter VI. This additional text is commented upon by Abhinavagupta

[1] *Nāṭyaśāstra*—XVIII. 43
[2] Cf. *Vedic Index*—"Nahuṣa"
[3] Śūdraka's '*Mṛichchakaṭika*' is an example of how drama really represented people's mood and culture.
[4] For details see my paper, "*The Karṇāṭas of Mithilā*" in the *ABORI*—XXXV; cf. Upendra Ṭhākur—"*History of Mithilā*", pp. 234 ff; S. N. Singh—'*History of Tirhut*'.
[5] *Abhinavagupta—An historical and philosophical study,* pp. 121-123.
[6] A. B. Keith—"*Sanskrit Drama*", p. 318.

and appears to have been known to Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa. Abhinavagupta makes an elaborate attempt to meet the objections against *śānta rasa* and establishes it as a *rasa*.[1]

(1) *Murāri Miśra*

The earliest reference about the existence of Sanskrit drama in Mithilā is to be found in the 9th-10th centuries of the Christian era if we take Murāri Miśra as a resident of Mithilā. Murāri was decidedly earlier than Jayadeva as we find the latter imitating the former in the *Prasannarāghava*.[2] Like Kālidāsa's *Meghadūta*, we find Murāri, in his *Anargharāghava*, describing the path to Ayodhyā and in this connection, he emphasises to go through Mithilā.[3] The *Anargharāghava*[4] is a story of Rāma in seven acts. Act IV is important. It shows Rāvaṇa's minister Mālyavanta lamenting on the failure of his scheme. Śūrpaṇakhā arrives from Videha and tells of the union of Rāma and Sītā. Mālyavanta insists that Rāvana should seek to separate the union. Mālyavanta advises Śūrpaṇakhā to assume the disguise of Mantharā, the maid of Kaikeyi, with the view of securing the banishment of Rāma. He is also cheered by the news, disclosed by Śūrpaṇakhā, of Paraśurāma's exchange of hot words with Rāma. Rāma is ultimately banished. In Act V, Jāmavanta overhears a dialogue between Rāvaṇa, disguised as a juggler, and Mārīcha in the forest. Jaṭāyu sees the outrage of Sītā's modesty and persues the ravisher. Act VI gives an account of the two spies of Rāvaṇa, named Sāraṇa and Śuka. In Act VII, on his return journey, Rāma passes over Malaya mountain, the forest, Narmadā, Kānchi, Ujjain, Māhiṣmatī, Yamunā, Gaṅgā, Vārāṇasi, Mithilā and Champā. From this particular *nāṭaka* and others, we see that the dramatists were attarcted more towards the epics and the Purāṇas than the *Vedas* as the epic stories are more humane in outlook and treatment if compared with the mythology of the Vedic hymns. Murāri has not made any attempt to improve upon the traditional narrative. His remarks are always hyperbolic. He had a good grounding in mythological stories and that is why he has succeeded in presenting a good tale. He has been successful in presenting sentences with harmonious sound. His power of expression is marvellous.[5] The play has no dramatic beauty. His ideas, in most cases, are far fetched and unnatural while his diction is inscrutable. He was a man of scholarly reading and much vocabulary.

His similies are often original and strike as peculiar. With a generally characteristic and magnificent style, he has shown a good lyrical harmony.

[1] Cf. S. K. De's article—"*The Śāntarasa in the Nāṭyaśāstra and the Daśarūpaka*" in the *Siddhabhārāti*, Vol. I., p. 233 ff.

[2] ii. 34 as compared with vii. 83.

[3] It is on this slender evidence that Murāri is considered to be a Maithila. Cf. Jayaswal—*Catalogue*—II, p. 11

[4] *Nirṇayasāgar edition.*

[5] *AR*—V. 6; VII. V. 6; VII. 107; VII. 90.

Krishnamāchāriar has rightly pointed out, "He is one of those poets whom European critics have been unable to appreciate....The play has been considered for poetical criticism and grammatical bearing. In his *Siddhānta Kaumudī*, Bhaṭṭoji Dīkṣit cites Murāri's expression as authority."[1] His work shows purity of conception, delicacy of feeling and brilliancy of facts. Ratnākara in his *Harivijaya* refers to Murāri as a playwright.[2] The *Anargharāghava* is a more ambitious play. It is a poetic composition of 567 verses. Here Rāma talks of the *vaidarbhi* style in poetry and *viparītarati* etc. It is one of the best examples of the degradations to where the Sanskrit language and dramatic art had sunk. Murāri himself admits—"How this good composition of Vālmīki has become *the joint stock capital for all writer marchants* ?[3]". From various sources, we learn about the ability of Murāri as a poet and a dramatist.[4]

Murāri was the son of Vardhamāna and Tantumati. He belonged to Maudgalya gotra. Murāri is claimed to be a Maithila. The most important argument in favour of this supposition is that almost all the *commentaries* on the *AR* were written by the Maithila scholars. The best commentary on this *nāṭaka* is by Rucipati.[5] There are various *commentaries* on the *AR*, *viz.*, *Commentaries* by Pūrṇa Saraswatī, Harihar, Mānavikrama, Rucipati, Dharmānada, Kṛṣṇa, Lakṣmidhara, Viṣṇupaṇdita, Viṣṇubhaṭṭa, Narachandra, Bhavanātha Miśra, Dhaneśwara and others. Two copies of the incomplete *mss.* of the *AR* in Maithilī character were discovered from Mithilā.[6] There have been vaious "*Murāris*" in Mithilā, but the author of the *AR* must be distinguished from them. The Maithilas

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[1] M. Krishnamachariar—*History of classical Sanskrit literature*, p. 638 ff.

[2] अंकोत्थनाटक इवोत्तमनायकस्य
नाशंकविर्व्यधत यस्य मुरारित्थम् ।। XXXVII. 167

[3] For details about Murāri cf *DMG*, XXVII. 74; XXXVI. 377 ff. *CC*—1.462; II. 106; *Bhandarkara's report*—1897—XX; XL. Wilson—*Theatre*—II. 375

[4] Cf. S. N. Singh, *op. cit.* p. 151.

देवीं वाचमुपासते हि बहवः सारं तु सारस्वतं
जानीते नितरामसौ गुरुकुलक्लिष्टो मुरारिः कविः ।
अब्धिर्लङ्घित एव वानरभटैः किं त्वस्य गम्भीरता-
मापातालनिमग्नपीवरतनुर्जानाति मन्थाचलः ।।
मुरारिपदचिन्तायां भवभूतेस्तु का कथा
भवभूतिं परित्यज्य मुरारिमुररीकुरु ।।

The *Sāraṅgadharpaddhati* says—

भवभूतिमनादृत्य निर्वाणमतिना मया ।
मुरारिपदचिन्तायामिदमाधीयते मनः ।।

From a commentary on the *AR* by Chatrakara we learn that Rāmasiṁhadeva, son of Narasiṁhadeva, defeated the *Turuṣka* king.

[5] The aim of Murāri's *AR* was to remove the unpleasant feelings of the audience, created by the earlier writers. The Sūtradhāra's description at the beginning probably refers to the *Mahāvīracharitam*, and the *Mālatīmādhava* of Bhavabhūti. Murāri is called Bāla-Vālmīki.

[6] K. P. Jayaswal—*Catalogue of Mithilā Mss.*, II, p. 1

claim not only Murāri as their own but also Kṛṣṇamiśra, the author of the *Prabodhachandrodaya*

(2) *Kṛṣṇamiśra*

The *Prabodhachandrodaya* of Kṛṣṇamiśra begins with the *Nāndipāṭha* of two verses and represents a type of which we have no other earlier specimen. The drama is unique in the sense that it follows a style of treatise of different systems of Indian philosophy. It is a commentary on the *Vedānta* aphorism and represents the Upaniṣadic *Vedānta*. It is one of the best satires in Sanskrit literature. Here the traditional schools of philosophy have been discussed on their merit. Since the author has tried to philosophise the whole thing, the dramatic force has suffered a set-back here. *Mīmāṁsā* and *Tarka* had their origins in Mithilā and our author seems to have been well conversant with those thoughts. The spirit of Vedic sacrifice was also preserved in Mithilā and Kṛṣṇamiśra seems to have been guided by the vedic spirit. This is one of the reasons why he is so insistently claimed as a Maithila. A *commentary* on the *PC* was noticed in Míthilā. It is on the palm-leaf and is written in Maithilī character.[1] There is a reference to Kumārilasvāmī and also to the banishment of Buddhism. The *PC* was extremely popular in Mithilā and some dramas have been written here on this line.[2]

The *PC* is a typical drama of its type and contains much of the then philosophical theories. It is in *six* acts and there are about 44 actors. Besides the Sūtradhāra and his wife we have the following characters:

विवेक is the hero.
मति is the heroine.
पुरुष is उपनिष्पति
प्रवोधोदय: is the son of पुरुष
श्रद्धा is प्रकृतित्रय:
शान्ति is the sister of विवेक
करुणा is a friend of शान्ति
मैत्री is a friend of श्रद्धा
विष्णुभक्ति is a friend of उपनिषत्
उपनिषत् is वेदान्तशास्त्र
सरस्वती is the friend of विष्णुभक्ति
क्षमा is the maid-servant of विवेक-वैराग्य, निदिध्यासन and संकल्प are मनस् उत्पन्ना: सारथी-प्रतिहारी etc. are इतरमहामोह and enemies of विवेक
चार्वाक is a friend of मोह. काम, क्रोध, लोभ, मोह, दम्भ, अहंकार are मोहामात्यादय:
मन:—संकल्पात्मकम् [3]

[1] Srī Umākānt Ṭhākur has drawn my attention towards this commentary.
[2] Cf. Kṛṣṇadatta Maithila's works.
[3] For details see my "*Heretical sects in the Purāṇas*" in the *ABORI* of 1957

दिगम्बर, भिक्षु, क्षपणक, कापालिक are बृद्धिजिनादिमतप्रवर्त्तकाः।
मिथ्या दृष्टि is the wife of मोह
विभ्रमावती is the friend of मिथ्यादृष्टि
इतिः is the wife of काम
हिंसा is the wife of क्रोध
तृष्णा is the wife of लोभ
वटु, शिष्यः, पुरुषः, दौवारिकः are others इतरे

Here we find *Buddhi*, *Kīrti*, and *Dhṛti* conversing when Buddha, adorned with his halo, appears. *Kāma* and *Rati* appear in the first scene. The story begins with *Viveka* and his queen *Mati*. The king takes Upaniṣad-Devī and a son *Prabodha* (Awakening) was born to them. In act II, there is a scathing criticism of the Paṇḍitas of Banāras, where *Dambha* and *Ahaṁkāra* conspire to prevent the birth of *Prabodha*. When *Śraddhā* tries to bring together Lady *Upaniṣad and Viveka*, *Mithyādṛṣṭi*, wife of *Māyāmoha* is set on her. *Śraddhā's* daughter *Śānti* is to be killed by *Krodha* and *Lobha*. In Act III, *Buddhists*, *Jainas* and *Kāpālikas* are criticised. The three Bohemians decide to abduct *Śraddhā Śāttviki* (Pure faith) who is supposed to be living in company of *Viṣṇubhakti* (devotion to *Viṣṇu*). In Act IV, *Śraddhā* is rescued by *Viṣṇubhakti*. In Act V, the battle is described and at the end, the Buddhists are driven out. Lady *Upaniṣad* stays with *Yajñavidyā* (the lore of sacrifice), *Mīmāṁsā* (ritual Science), *Tarkavidyā* (Logic) and is brought to the king where the birth of *Prabodha* is announced. In spite of its being of little importance to the dramatic literature, the *PC* is an important contribution towards the development of Sanskrit Drama in Mithilā. In certain respects, it is a unique production in the history of Sanskrit literature. Kṛṣṇamiśra flourished in the *eleventh* century A.D.

(3) *Abhinavagupta*

In so far as the dramatic literature in Mithilā is concerned, the *Abhinavabhāratī* of Abhinavagupta is an epoch-making contribution. It represents the erudition of scholarship and covers the whole ground connected with the drama. It discusses in details the architecture of the theatre, dress and other equipments of the actors, religious ceremonials, music, dance, movements, gestures, mode of delivery, the various classes of drama and poetry and their emotions and sentiments. All fine arts in due proportion were to be employed in the performance of a drama. Our ancient thinkers believed that all the fine arts were concentrated in dramatic art. Abhinavagupta has explained the implications of "*Vyutpatti*" and "*Daśarūpa*" and has further pointed out that an emotion becomes a sentiment when it is transfomed into an object of enjoyment through the co-operation of the determinants, the consequents including the involuntary manifestations of feelings. There can be little doubt that Abhinavagupta exercised a considerable influence over the writers and stage directors of Mithilā during the periods following him. Though not directly a

writer of any known drama, Abhinavagupta certainly laid the foundation of the science of dramaturgy in Mithilā.

(4) *Jyotirīśwara Ṭhākur*

Jyotirīśwara Ṭhākur was one of the most prolific writers of Mithilā in the middle ages. His knowledge was encyclopaedic and that is evident from his masterpiece, the *Varṇanaratnākara.* He wrote an important work on erotics known as *Pañchasāyaka.* He flourished in the first quarter of the 14th century A.D. Since the authenticity of Umāpati is in question, Jyotirīśwara stands as the first known dramatist in Mithilā. He was also known as Kaviśekharāchārya and was a fast friend of Harisiṁhadeva of the Karṇāṭa dynasty. He is famous for his *prahasana*, named *Dhūrtasamāgamanāṭaka.*[1] It is believed that this drama was staged at the victory festivals in the court of Harisiṁhadeva. It refers to the contest of Viśwanagara and his pupil Durāchāra. Viśwanagara, jaṅgama or mendicant of a particular class, quarrels with his disciple for the possession of Anaṅgasenā, a courtesan. They refer the case to Assajati Miśra, a Brāhmin, who lived by solving the knotty problems of law and he decreed that until it could be decided to whom the damsel belonged, she should remain under the protection of himself as umpire. The pupil had every reason to complain as he had seen the damsel and had confided his love to his master. The judge impounded the damsel for himself while the Vidūṣaka sought to secure the prize for himself. The barber, Mulnāchaka, turned up to demand the payment of a debt from Anaṅgasenā, which was paid by Assajati.

The so-called published text of the *DS* has not come to light. The drama is said to have been staged after Harisiṁha's victory over the Muslims. It is the first authoritative *nāṭaka* in Sanskrit in Mithilā.[2] In Mitra's *notices,* we have the following entrants—

Ms. No. 85—धूर्तसमागम प्रहसनं ।
ग्रन्थकार—ज्योतिरीश्वर
अक्षर—नागरं—देशीय कागज—

There is another complete *Mss.* of this *nāṭaka* in the Rāj Library, Darbhanga, the details of which are given below.[3]

Character—Maithili.

In loose sheets, lines 8 on a page up to folio No. 6; after that only *nine* lines on one page, on page 8, there are ten lines; and again on folio No. 10, there are *eight* lines, after that *nine* lines and on the last page seven lines only.

[1] Edited by C. Cappaller and analysed by Wilson—"*Theatre*"—II. 408. It was published in Lithograph but it is not available now. Probably it was meant for private circulation. Dr. Jayakānt Miśra of the Allahabad University informed me that he had been able to discover another *Drama* of Jyotirīśwara in Nepāl.

[2] R. L. Mitra—*Notices*—I., p. 48.

[3] The details have been procured by my friend Śrī Umākānt Ṭhākur.

—11 *Folios* (10.7″×3.7″), 38 letters in a line.
This is a complete *ms*.

Beginning— ॐ नमो गणेशाय—
हर्षादम्भोजजन्मप्रभृतिदिविपदां संसदि प्रीतिमत्या
स्व सामौलौ पुरारे दुहितृपरिणये साक्षितं चुम्ब्यमाने।
तद्वक्त्रं मौलिवक्त्रे मिलितमिति भृशं वीक्ष्य चन्द्रः सहासौ।
दृष्ट्वा तदूत्तमाशुस्मितसुभगमुखः पातुः वः पंचवक्त्रः

अपिच— वक्त्राम्भोरुहि विस्मिताः स्तवकिता वक्षोरुहि स्फारिताः।
श्रोणिसीमनि गुम्फिताश्च वलयो वक्षणोश्च पुनविसरताः।
पार्वत्याः प्रतिगात्रचित्रगतयःतन्वन्तु भद्रासृवो।
विद्धस्यान्तिकपुष्पसायकशरैरीशस्य दृग्भंगयः।

End— विदूषकः— नान्द्यन्ते सूत्रधारः। अलमतिविस्तरेण।
मिश्रस्य करचरणवन्धनमपनीय
भो आणवेदु मिस्सो कि अवरम्
अहो अपि ऑणिब्वाह इस्सं।
सन्तः शान्ति पराभवन्तु सुखिनः
सौजन्यभाजा जनाः। इति निष्क्रान्तः।

(5) *Umāpati Upādhyāya*

The tradition of dramatic literature and art did not end with Jyotirīśwara. The decay of Sanskrit literature in other parts of India did not bring about any alteration in so far as the growth of Sanskrit literature and drama in Mithilā was concerned. The *Pārijātaharaṇa*[1] of Umāpati Upādhyāya is an example of the interest taken by the people of Mithilā in the growth of dramatic literature. True it is that the glory the classical age of Sanskrit literature was no longer there, but this much is evident that the people, in general, had begun to take active interest in this field and that is why songs in Maithilī were introduced along with conversation in Sanskrit or Prākṛit. Various dramatists of this name are known in Sanskrit literature.[2] Aufrecht mentions fourteen Umāpatis. Dr. Jayakānta Miśra calls Maithila Umāpati as a *Kīrtanīyā* dramatist.[3] Mr. Singh calls it a drama of the *Rūpaka* class.[4]

[1] There are *four* printed editions of this work—
(1) Published by the Maithilī Publishing Company, Darbhanga (1893)
(2) Re-edited by Chandā Jhā
(3) Edited by Pt, Chetnātha Jhā
(4) Edited and published by G. A. Grierson in the *JBORS. III*. pp. 20-90.

[2] *Catalogus Catalogorum* I., p. 70.

[3] *History of Maithilī literature*, Vol. I., p. 301.

[4] Single—*op. cit.* p. 174 ff. Farquhar in his *Outline of Religious literature* (pp. 306, 378) says that one Umāpatidhara was a contemporary of Vidyāpati at *Tirhut* in the 15th century A. D. Also cf. *JBBRAS*. XXXIV. 142; XLIII. 76; *ZDMG*. XL; *JDL*. XVI. 44,

The story of the *nāṭaka*, in brief, is as follows: Nārada presents a *pārijāta* flower to Kṛṣna which he gave to Rukmiṇī. Satyabhāmā was enraged and Kṛṣṇa sent to Indra for some more flowers, which he refused to give. Thereupon there was a war wherein he was defeated and Satyabhāmā was propitiated. The plot is finished and the characters are well developed. Arjuna has a distinct role to play. Umāpati's songs teem with allusions, each of which suggests a definite picture.[1] The story of this *nāṭaka* can be traced to 124 to 135 of the *Harivaṁśa*; *Viṣṇupurāṇa* (V. 30, 31) and the *Bhāgawatapurāṇa* (X. 69). The author, here, follows the *Harivaṁśa* with only one difference that Kṛṣṇa's assistant, in the fight with Indra, was, according to him not his son, Pradyumna, but his friend Arjuna Dhanañjaya. A *nāṭaka* is a heroic comedy in not less than five acts and hence this name does not seem appropirate in this case (*Pārijāta-harana*) as it is only in one act. This is a speciality with almost all the *nāṭakas* of Mithilā. Umāpati seems to have been influenced by the *Gītagovinda* of Jayadeva. Since Umāpati is a very controversial figure in the whole realm of dramatic literature in Mithilā, it is desirable to discuss here the date of the *Pārijātaharaṇa*.

Date of Umāpati

The date of Umāpati Upādhyāy is still controversial. Grierson placed him in the first half of the fourteenth century of the Christian era.[2] The learned scholar held that Harisiṁhadeva (1304-1324) of the Karṇāṭa dynasty abdicated and retired to forest, but as a matter of history, he seems to have been conquered and stained by a certain Mukundasena.[3] Umāpati says thatHarideva *Hindupati* successfully opposed Muslim attacks and he was one "whose dread scimitar cuts the forest of the *Yavanas*".[4] This may refer to Ghiyasuddin's attack on Tirhut.[5] It is a recorded fact in history. Umāpati was a resident of Koilakha[6] and is the only and the first unquestioned and recognised writer of *nāṭaka* in Mithilā. He calls his *protege*, "Mithileśa".[7] Since he has called his *protege* "Mithileśa", it is difficult to accept the suggestion put forward by Paṇḍita Chetanātha Jhā that Umāpati was the courtier of an ordinary king of Nepāl. Grierson has rightly pointed out: "How could a poet of Mithilā....have called the petty princeling a lord paramount of other kings and 'a king of Mithilā'

1 *JBORS*. III. 21.

2 *JBORS*. III. 25.

3 *Ibid*. cf. *JASB* (1835), p. 122 ff; *IA*. VII. 89 ff. IX. 188; XIII. 414; *JASB* XI (N.S.) p. 407 ff. Rāsbehāridāsa—*Mithilā darpaṇa* I. 60 ff.

4 *PH*—सूत्रधार says—यवनवनच्छेदनकरालकरवालेन विच्छेद गत।.

5 Upendra Ṭhākur—*op. cit*. Chapter VII; cf. my *History of Muslim Rule in Tirhut* and *History of Bihar*.

6 *JBORS*.III.25; Chetanātha Jhā. *PH*.p.11; *Pustaka Bhaṇḍāra Jayanti Smāraka Granṭha* p. 10; *Hindustani* (April 1935), pp.113-130. Umāpati was son of Ratnapati or Ramāpati.

7 *PH*—पारावारो गुणानामयमतुलगुणः पातु वो मैथिलेश:

if that is the meaning of Mithileśa?"[1] The attempt of Dr. Jayakānta Miśra to identify "Hindupati" of Umāpati with a king of Bundelkhaṇḍa is all the more confusing.[2] How can a foreigner be called "Mithileśa" by a poet of Mithilā? It is vain rather unnecessarily demagogic to suggest that Umāpati meant the king of Bundelkhaṇḍa in his appellations "Hindupati". A simple mention by Lochana could not have solved the question of his date and identity as Dr. J. K. Miśra believes.

Umāpati has paid high tributes to his patron, Hariharadeva.[3] If we dive deep into the contemporary Sanskrit texts, it will be evident that he was a dread to the Muslims.[4] It seems plausible to suggest that Harisiṁhadeva succeeded in ousting the Muslim raiders in Mithilā till he was finally defeated by Ghiyāsuddin Tughluq and ultimately fled to the hills.[5] The traditional śloka in Mithilā represents that Harisiṁha fled to Nepāl in 1326 A.D.[6] The findings of Paṇḍita Chetanātha Jhā are based more on tradition than on solid facts. Even on philological and linguistic grounds, we cannot place him later the fourteenth century A.D. Hence in the present state of our knowledge and unless further evidence is forthcoming, it is better to assign Umāpati to the first quarter of the fourteenth century A.D.[7]

(6) *Maṇika*

After the occupation of Mithilā by the Muslims, a good number of Sanskrit poets and dramatists fled to Nepāl and produced their literary creations there. There is no doubt that the relation between these two countries had been very cordial and intimate since time immenorial.[8] Vidyāpati's influence on Nepalese life and culture is immense.[9] Maṇika of Mithilā (*c.* 14th century A.D.) excercised a considerable influence over the literary traditions of Nepāl. He is said to have written "*Bhairavānand nāṭaka*" in the court of Jayasthiti of Nepāl. Maṇika was the son of Rājā Vardhana, expert in dramaturgy. The *Bhairavānand nāṭaka* is secular

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[1] *JBORS*. III. 553-57.

[2] *HML*. Vol. I., pp. 306-7.

[3] *JBORS*-III, p. 29—सकल नृपति पति
P. 42—सकल नृपति पति हिन्दु पति
also cf. pp. 43, 53 etc.

[4] Cf. *Dānaratnākara*; *Kṛtyaratnākara*
Dhūrtasamāgamanāṭaka—नानायोधविरुद्ध निर्जित-
सुरत्राणस्य सद्वाहिनी ।

[5] This fact is supported by a *Ms. Basātinuluns*. now preserved in the British Museum. Relevant pages of this *ms*. in photostat copy are with me. Also cf. my '*History of Muslim Rule in Tirhut*' (unpublished).

[6] Upenda Ṭhākur—*op cit*. Harisimhadeva; *ABORI*. XXXV & my '*History of Bihar*.

[7] Cf. *Hindustani* (April 1935), pp. 115-116; *JDL* (1927), p. 44; *Mādhuri* II. Pl. II, pp. 749-50; also Bajranga Varma's article in "*Sahitya*" (1957).

[8] Cf. My article "*Bihar & Nepāl*" (600 B.C. to 1815 A.D.) in *G. D. College Bulletin Series* No. 4.

[9] Cf. *Vaṅgīya Sāhitya Pariṣad Patrikā* (Bangābda 1336), p. 172 ff.

drama. Bhairava is the hero, while Madanāvatī is the heroine.[1] Madanāvatī, a celestial dancer, is cursed by a Ṛṣi to become a *mānusī* This drama was staged on the occasion of the marriage ceremony of Dharmamalla, son of Jayasthiti. This was probably the earliest Sanskrit drama in Nepāl written by a Maithila in the reign of Jayasthitimalla (1318-1394).[2] Like all other successful dramatists of the middle ages, Maṇika seems to have been successful in the execution of his plots.

(7) *Vidyāpati*

Vidyāpati is one of the greatest poets of India. After the conquest of northern India by the Muslims, there was an all round decadence in the country and the Sanskrit scholarship suffered a severe set-back. During this period of decadence, the Sanskrit scholars of the time took refuge in those parts where Muslim power was the slowest to extend. The Sanskrit learning deteriorated, while the vernacular literature progressed well. Vernacular was the only means of communications between different sections of the populace. We have seen above that Umāpati in his *PH* employed vernacular songs to make his drama more attractive. Even in the classical age of Sanskrit literature, *Prākṛit* and *Pāli* were used in the *nāṭakas* simply to make them more attractive for the people. In the middle ages, it was idle to seek name, fame and popularity through the medium of a language for which there was no popular audience. Only few could understand pure Sanskrit. Vernacular, therefore, found its way in the literary Sanskrit compositions of the time and in Mithilā we find its first use by Umāpatī.[3] It has been observed by an eminent authority that "for centuries the Sanskrit dramas continued to be produced in very substantial numbers and that so strong was the force of tradition that the first attempt to introduce the vernacular into the drama by Vidyāpati Ṭhākur in Bihār (*I consider Umāpati to be the first*) took the form of producing works in which the characters use Sanskrit and Prākṛit and the songs only are in Maithilī."[4]

The Late Śivanandan Ṭhākur brought to light a Sanskrit drama, by Vidyāpati, entitled *Maṇimañjarīnāṭikā*,[5] an extract of which is given below.

अदिष्टोऽस्मि परिषदा यदद्य श्रीविद्यापतिनामधेयस्य कवेः कृतिरभिनवा मणिमञ्जरी नाम नाटिका भवद्भिरस्मदग्रेऽभिनेतव्येति तद्भवतु तावत् प्रेयसीमाहूय संगीतकं सम्पादयामि ।

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[1] H.P. Śāstrī—*Nepāl Catalogue*—Preface. XXXVII ff. Cf. details. Kumār Gañgānanda Singh's article in the *JASB*. (N.S.) XVIII (1922), p. 253 ff; XX (1924), p. 73 ff.

[2] A four act drama "Rāmāyaṇa" was written in 1360 A.D. in Nepāl. Cf.H.P. Śāstrī *op cit*. XXXVII ff.

[3] Dr. J. K. Miśra *op. cit.* I. 255 says "The first known writer who introduced vernacular in Sanskrit was Vidyāpati Ṭhākur. Unfortunately we have no trace of his practice having been continued immediately after him in Mithilā proper." I personally do not agree with the first part of his observation.

[4] A. B. Keith *op. cit.*, p. 243; for Vidyāpati, also consult Mitra-Mazumdār'—'*Vidyāpati*' and Subhadra Jhā—"*The Songs of Vidyāpati.*"

[5] S. N. Ṭhākur—*Mahākavi*' Vidyāpati, pp. 48-49; 86. Recently Paṇḍita Viṣṇulāl Jhā Śāstrī has also discovered a *ms.* of this *nāṭaka.*

Another *nāṭaka* of Vidyāpati is entitled "*Gorakṣavijaya*". It has speeches in Sanskrit and songs in Maithilī—

श्री विद्यापतिसत्कविपुरस्य गोरक्षविजयनाम नाटकनटनाथ महाराजाधिराज श्री मत्शिवसिंहदेवपाद: ।

He was one of the most versatile scholars of Mithilā and has written on almost all branches of learning. So long as his dramas are not published, it is difficult to evaluate their importance. In his *Padāvalī*, Vidyāpati has given enough food for thought. There also his dramatic art is clear.[1] Vidyāpati was a successful dramatist. In spite of being a first rate lyricist, he did not give up writing in Sanskrit as that was the yardstick of gauging scholarship in those days. The publication of his two dramas in Sanskrit will enable us to assess his talent in this field. As a sound scholar of Sanskrit, he seems to have maintained the decorum of original standard in his dramas.

(8) *Jayadeva Miśra*

Jayadeva Miśra's *Prasannarāghava*,[2] in seven arts, is an important contribution to the field of Sanskrit drama. In the opening scene, the dramatist offers a kind of an apology by making the *actor* ask the Manager as to why all poets write only about Rāmachandra. All the traditional plots of Rāma legend unroll before us, brightened up, here and there, by the feverish poetic effusions of the dramatists.[3] Here we have got the conception of the primeval *puruṣa* in the form of a boy. The whole of *act* IV is more of the nature of an interlude than *act* in the play. The *PR* is the natural exponent of the higher form of the dramatic art of the post classical period. Keith says: "It is a typical play of the later drama. The spectacle of the river goddess grouped round the ocean affords admirable scope for an effective tableau,"[4] but it is wholly out of harmony with dramatic action.

There have been several Jayadevas in Sanskrit literature.[5] In Mithilā, Pakṣadhara Miśra is also known as Jayadeva who flourished in the 15th century. The author of the *PR* was a Maithila, no doubt, but it is difficult to say if he was identical with Pakṣadhara.[6] The author of the *PR* also wrote a book named '*Chandrāloka*' and he had the surname '*Pīyūṣavarṣa*.'[7]

[1] Cf. my article "गीतिनाट्यकार विद्यापति" published in the volume prepared on the occasion of the First All India Maithilī Writers' Conference, held at Dharbhañga in November 1956.

[2] Published in Bombay in 1894.

[3] *PR*. IV. 5. Jayadeva seems to have imitated Murāri. Read II. 34 as compared with VII. 83.

[4] Keith *op. cit.* p. 246.

[5] Aufrecht—*Catologus Catalogorum*, Vol. I.

[6] Singh. *op. cit.* 137, a view which he comfounds on p. 138.

[7] चन्द्रालोकममुंस्वयं वितनुते पीयूषवर्ष: कृती—Jayadeva of the *Gītagovinda* fame was decidedly different from the author of the *PR*.

This Jayadeva was the son of Mahādeva and Sumitrā.[1] Since he is quoted in the "*Alaṁkāra Sarvaswa*" of Ruyyaka, he can be placed in the 15th century.[2] Jayadeva was a well-known poet and dramatist of his time and his influence on Tulsidāsa can be gleaned through the following lines—

PR (Calcutta edition)	*Ramāyana* (P. N. Bhārgava, Lucknow edn.)
P. 127—चन्द्रहास हर मे परितापं— रामचन्द्रविरहानलजातम् त्वं हि कान्तिजितमौलिकचूर्णं धारया वहसि शीतलमम्भः ।।	*Sundarakāṇḍa*—P. 376 चन्द्रहास हरु मम परिताप । रघुपति विरह अनल संताप ।। शीतल निशि तव असि वर धार । कह सीता हरु मम दुख भार ।।

Instances, in this respect, can be multiplied—Cf *PR*, pp. 5, 27, 129, 132-33.

Rāmāyaṇa, pp. 119, 377, 378-79.

Besides, being a dramatist, Jayadeva was also a *Nāiyāyika*, but different from Pakṣadhara.[3]

(9) *Bāṇakavi*

Bāṇakavi was a Maithila Brāhmin and belonged to village Bhaḍārisama near Manigachi station in Darbhanga district. He is said to have founded *Vāṇeśwarī Bhagawatī*' in that village. The image is still there and is held in reverence. He is different from the reputed author Bāṇa of *Harṣacharita* fame. Bāṇakavi was a very famous and important Paṇḍit of Mithilā. He is the author of *Pārvatīpariṇayanāṭaka*.[4] Keith nurtures doubt about the authenticity of this dramatist.[5] According to Keith, his real name was Vāmana Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa. The author of the *Sṛngārabhūṣaṇa*, Bāṇa, was different from Bāṇakavi.

The *Pārvatīpariṇaya* deals with the rituals of marriage ceremonies prevalent in Mithilā. The drama is in five acts and is based on the *Śivapurāṇa*. In *Nāndi*, there are two verses and the *Sūtradhāra* comes after that. The *prastāvanā* ends with *Naṭi* and *Sūtradhāra* and then comes Nārada. Then Himavāna enters with Menā and others and that closes the first act. The second act begins with *Viṣkambhaka* and then with the conversation of

[1] *Chandrāloka* (Bombay edn. 1914), I. 16; *PR*. (Calcutta edn. 1872), p. 6.

[2] Two verses of the *PR* are quoted in the *Sāraṅgdhara paddhati* (dated 1463 A.B.). For details, cf. S. Levi, *Le theatre Indien*, p. 281.

[3] *PR*—P. 7— येषां कोमलकाव्यकौशलकला लीलावती भारती
तेषां कर्कशतर्कवक्रवचनोद्गारेऽपि किं हीयते ।
यैः कान्ताकुचमण्डले कररुहाः सानन्दमारोपिता-
स्तैः किं मत्तकरीन्द्रकुम्भशिखरे नारोपणीयाः शराः ।।

[4] The text was edited in 1917 by R. Schmidt. (Leipzig.)

[5] Keith *op. cit.*, p. 221

Vāsantikā and Rambhā. Dramatically speaking, this is not proper. Here it should have been Praveśakaḥ. Devanandi, Bṛhaspati, Devadūta, Kāmaḥ and Vasanta also appear. In act III, both Bṛhaspati and Mahendra enter followed by Nārada Rambhā and Vaitālika. Nandi, Jayā-Vijayā, Śaṅkara and Pārvati appear in act IV. In act V, Kañchukī, Himavāna, Śilādhāra, Kauśikī, Nārada, Śaṅkara, Śāraṅgī, Brahmā, Bṛhaspati, Pārvatī, Jayā-Vijayā, Kulaparvatāḥ and others appear. On the whole, the drama is good and up to the mark though it lacks in the qualities, found in the dramas of the classical period. Popular tradition makes him a friend of Vācaspati Jhā and brother of Rucipati. On this basis he may be placed in the second half of the 15th century.

(10) *Śaṅkara Miśra*

Śaṅkara Miśra stands as a prominent luminary in the firmament of Mithilā's sky of dramatic literature in the 15th century. He was the son of Bhavanātha and the nephew of Jīvanātha. He was an inhabitant of village Sarisava.[1] He is the author of *Śrīkṛṣṇavinodanāṭaka*. There have been various persons of this name in Mithilā.[2] Our dramatist is to be distinguished from Śaṅkara Miśra, the author of *Smṛtisudhākara*. Besides *Śrīkṛṣṇavinoda*, Śaṅkara wrote *Manobhavaparābhavanāṭaka*[3] and in his younger days, he also wrote a comedy on the marriage of Śiva-Pārvatī, entitled *Gaurīdigambaraprahasana*,[4] two *mss.* of which have been noticed (one on palm-leaf and another on paper).

The following extracts from the *Gaurīdigambara* are available—

Beginning— शङ्कराय नमः ।
दिदीदिन्दीन्दीदीधकिकटनदन्नन्दिमुरजं ।
रणद्राणद्राणद्रणरणरणद्धर्घररवम् ।
स्फुरत्फूफूफूफूफणिपतिफणाफूत्कृतिशतं
शिवं भूयो भूयः प्रथमनटनाट्यन्दिशतु वः ।

End— श्रीमन्तः सन्तु सन्तः सपदि सुमनसां सौमनस्यापवर्गौ ।
पट्कर्माणस्त्रिकालं हविरनुपहृतं जुह्वतां प्रीतिभाजः ।
गावश्चाम्भोधराश्च प्रचुरमिह पयः किञ्च मुञ्चन्तु नित्यं,
राजानश्च प्रजासु प्रकृतिषु च सदा नीतिभाजो भवन्तु ॥

It is a Sanskrit farce dealing with the marriage of Śiva-Pārvatī. Śaṅkara Miśra was a great philosopher and wrote chiefly on *Vaiśeṣika*, rituals, *Smṛti* etc. The *Gaurīdigambara* was probably staged at the instance of his father.[5] He was alive in Śaka 1415 (=1488 A.D.).[6] He also wrote a

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[1] Quoted in Gaṅgadatta's *Bhṛṅgadūta*
[2] Aufrecht, Vol. II., 236.
[3] *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 626.
[4] Jayaswal—*Catalogue*—II. 56, No. 53*A*—The colophon of No. 53 says—"लसं ५८१ कार्तिक कृष्णैकादश्यां तिथौ देसुश्रालग्रामे महामहोपाध्याय श्री पण्डितराजस्याज्ञया लिखितमिदं श्री विश्वनाथकरणेन ।
[5] *Notices* III, p. 52, No. 83.
[6] H. P. Śāstrī, *Nepāl Catalogue*, I. 49

commentary on the *Gītagovinda* of Jayadeva.[1] He built a temple of goddess Durgā which still stands in village Sarisava. Since his dramas are not published, we cannot evaluate their importance. There can be little doubt that he was a finished scholar of his age. His deep learning and scholarship impressed his writings and his influence on the Sanskrit literature of Mithilā is immense.

(11) *Devānanda*

Devānanda, also called Kavīndra, lived during the time of Mahārājā Mahinātha Ṭhākur and Narapati Ṭhākur. His best known drama is *Uśāharaṇa*.[2] It is mutilated and incomplete. There is nothing remarkable in this drama. Few extracts are as follows :[3]

Beginning— विजयं सदा। असुरास्सब्दते प्राप्ता
नूनं क्षयभयान्तिते। पुनराकाशे करनं

Jayswal—*Catalogue*—II. 48. No. 43. The colophon reads as follows—इति श्री महामहोपाध्याय दिनेश्वर मिश्रात्मज श्रीशंकर मिश्र विरचितायां श्रीशालिनाथ कारितायां गीतगोविन्द टीकायां....This Śaṅkara is the *ātmaja* of Dineśwara. This Śaṅkara is said to have written commentaries on *Vaiśeṣika* and *Nyāya* and also on the *Gītagovinda*. His residence in Sarisava is still located.

Gaṅgādatta in his *Bhṛngadūta* says—

मीमांसाया: श्रवण सरसा शेमुषी तावकी चेत्।
चित्ते चित्ते किमपि कविताऽकर्णने कौतुके वा।।
तव भ्रमनं वृद्धजन चतु: पाठिकाभिस्तदात्वम्।
शोभाशालि प्रियं सरिसवग्रामरत्नं परीया:।।

दत्वा—लिखनार्थमवधेहि।
नटी—अज्ज कि उण तं ण आणे
सूत्र—अज्जे श्रृणु लिखनार्थं पत्रिकायेतां
आयासेन समुद्रमप्य वचिता कष्टाति
कष्टेनया स्रष्टु दगखिती परैव पितया
दृषट्वा कुतो लङ्घिता.....

End— या नाना गुण पूरिता बहुरसा............

(12) *Govinda Jhā*

Govinda Jhā was the *Guru* of Rāmdāsa Jhā. He is the author of *Nalacharitanāṭaka*. He was a contemporary of Sundar Ṭhākur. Chandā Jhā noticed his works. Probably he is the author of *Govindatattva mīmāṁsā*.[4] The *Nalacharita* deals with the story of Nala's exile. The dialogue is in Sanskrit and Prākṛit and the songs are in Maithilī. Poignant feelings of Damayantī

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[1] It is doubtful whether Śaṅkara, the dramatist, was the same as one who wrote commentaries on *Darśana* & the *Gītagovinda*, because there is difference of opinion with regard to their parentage and ancestry.

[2] It is in possession of Śrī Narendranātha Dāsa of Sakhawār.

[3] Quoted from Miśra's *HML.*, p. 300

[4] *Nepāl Catalogue*, p. 17. Probably the *Bihar Research Society* also noticed this *ms.*

and repentance of Nala are some of the best examples of this drama. The author may be assigned to 17th-18th century A.D.[1] He was the author of *Kṛṣṇacharita* also. Both these dramas are unpublished.[2]

(13) *Vaṁśamaṇi Jhā*

Vaṁśamaṇi Jhā made his mark as a dramatist in the court of Lakṣmīnarasiṁhamalla of Kāntipur in Nepāl. He was the author of a long *Kṛṣna-kāvya* in Sanskrit. He was a great musician and he composed his famous '*Saṅgeeta bhāskara*'. He was the author of two dramas, *viz.* *Muditamadālasā* and *Gītadigaṁbara*.[3] The *Gītadigaṁbara* is a story of love between Śiva and Pārvatī. The drama was composed to entertain the princes and Paṇḍitas who had assembled to see the *Tulāpuruṣadāna*.[4] It is written in imitation of the inimitable style of the *Gītagovinda* of Jayadeva. It is in four acts—

Act I—मुदित महेश
Act II—मानिनी भंग
Act III—विरक्त विरुपाक्ष
Act IV—सकाम कामेश्वर

(14) *Rāmdāsa Jhā*

Rāmadāsa Jhā was a disciple of Govinda Jhā[5] and a contemporary of Rājā Sundara Ṭhākur of Darbhaṅgā.[6] He composed the famous "*Ānanda-vijayanāṭaka*". The drama is written in Sanskrit, Prākṛit and Maithilī. There are in all four acts:

Act I—एव सोत्कंठ माधवो नाम प्रथमोऽङ्कः
Act II—इति सोत्कंठ माधवो नाम द्वितीयोऽङ्कः
Act III & Act IV—Nameless.

In act I, the hero, Mādhava, is eager for his beloved when he learns of Rādhā's beauty from his friend Ānandakara. In act II, Mādhava, with the help of his friend sees Rādhā. Here the plot has been made a bit interesting. Ānandakara, in the guise of an astrologer, Guṇanidhāna, asks Rādhā and her friend Vicakṣaṇa and Vācāla to collect flowers for Śiva worship, and while they are busy, both the friends appear.[7] Rādhā is enchanted to see Mādhāva. Rādhā begins worshipping the Lord. She feels the pangs of separation and a Kāpālika[8] consoles Rādhā. The same condition of the hero is described in act IV and ultimately they are united.

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1 The *ms.* of the *Nalacharita* is in possession of Śrī N. N. Dās of Sakhwāra.
2 Wrongly called Vaṅgamaṇi by H. P. Śāstrī. Vide. *Catalogue.* I. 527.
3 The *ms.* is in possession of Dr. J. K. Miśra of the Allahabād University.
4 Krishnamachariar—*op. cit.* p. 344; Singh—*op. cit.* p. 180.
5 Govinda Jhā, the dramatist, referred to above.
6 It was published by the Rāj press in 1333. Another edition was brought out from Muzzaffarpur by Śrī Bhubneshwar Singh Bhuvan.
7 The event reminds us of the bee episode in Kālidāsa's "*Śākuntalam*".
8 It seems that Kāpālikas, as a sect, continued at least up to the 17th century A.D.

There is nothing remarkable in the drama and the whole thing seems to have been a sort of imitation from his predecessors.

(*15*) *Hariharopādhyāya*

Hariharopādhyāya was one of the famous Sanskrit writers of Mithilā. His famous drama is *Bhartriharinirvedaṁ.*[1] In this drama, there is a glorification of the yoga philosophy. It teaches that the *sumum bonum* is the discrimination and separation of soul from matter, thus leading through renunciation of the world to isolation of the ego. It has *Śānta* for its sentiment, the leading man is the famous ascetic Gorakhanātha, the founder of the Śaiva sect and the *Kanaphaṭakā yogi* of the early part of the 15th century A.D. Both Sanskrit and Prākṛit have been used.[2] The present work is a drama representing *Śāntarasa.*[3] It begins with a salutation to Śiva. In act III, we come across with Gorakh. It is a small drama.

Harihara also wrote another drama known as *Prabhāvatīpariṇaya.*[4] It is not published. A short note from the notices of R. L. Mitra[5] is given below—

Beginning—

देव्या मानापनोदप्रणतशिवशिरः शीतधाम्ना नखेन्दौ
सम्पूर्ण सैंहिकेया कृति कुटिल जटामण्डलार्द्धविरुद्ध।
गीवर्णाश्चन्द्र दर्व्यं भ्रमचकितहृदोन्यञ्चदेतत् किरीटोत्
संगाद् गंगा प्रवाहे प्रवहति विहितस्नानपुण्याः पुनन्तु ।।

ध्यानावधानपरिलङ्घनजागरूकं
शेषानलोन्मथितमन्मथविग्रहस्य।
सद्यः प्रबुद्ध करुणापरिणाहदीर्घं
देवस्य पातु परिदेवितमिन्दुमौलेः ।।

नान्द्यन्ते सूत्रधारः। अलमति विस्तरेण। पुरोऽवलोक्य। कथमयमशेषभुवनवनिता विधीयमानसायन्तनमंगलदीपिकासहस्रसमकालमेव पूर्वाचलशिखरसौधपरिसरे।

*   *   *   *

एषा तयोः प्रथमजेन निजानुजात—
श्री नीलकण्ठकविकण्ठविभूषणाय।
गोविन्दसूनुगुणगुम्फ निषक्त सूक्ति[6]
मुक्तावली हरिहरेण चिरेण दीर्णा।

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[1] It is a published work. It was published from Bombay in 1936; cf. *JAOS.* XXV. 197-230.

[2] For other works of Harihara cf Aufrecht, Vol I., 762; Singh *op. cit.* 134. The Bombay edition of the *BN* has to say as follows about Harihara—"अत्र हरिहरोपाध्यायो मिथिलादेशे कदा समुत्पन्न इति न निश्चीयते एतत्प्रणीतस्यास्य भतृंहरिनिर्वेदनाम्नो नाटकस्यैक ....Page I F.N. 1.

[3] Krishnamachariar—*op. cit.* p. 317. Cf. Keith—*Sanskrit literature*, p. 248.

[4] Jayaswal. *Catalogue.* II,p. 88, No. 84; cf. *CCI.* 354. Singh. *op. cit.* p. 134 says that Harihara, brother of Nīlkāṇtha, wrote this drama.

[5] R. L. Mitra—*Notices*, VII. 159. No. 2395.

[6] Is he the same as the author of *Harihara Sūktimuktāvalī*?

विषय:––ब्रजलाभसुतया प्रभावत्या सह प्रद्युम्नस्य परिणय वृतान्तमवलम्व्य विरचितमिदंनाटकम् ।
तत्र प्रथमाङ्के—सारणभद्रयोरभिनयेन सुकुमारे कैशोरे वयसि वर्तमाना प्रभावती सह सहचरीभि: भवनदीर्घिकायां......प्रद्युम्नोऽपि चित्रफलके प्रभावतीप्रतिविम्बदर्शनेन.............
द्वितीयाङ्के––प्रभावत्या पूर्वरागवर्णनं—
तृतीयाङ्के––नटवेशेन प्रद्युम्नस्य व्रजनामपुर प्रयाण वर्णनं––
चतुर्थाङ्के––तत्र तयोरन्योन्यदर्शनं मदनलेख प्रस्थापनञ्च......कुसुमवाटिकां ......प्रभावत्या भ्रमरवाधनां सूचयन्त्या:......
पंचमाङ्के––उद्यानसौन्दर्य एवँ सन्ध्यावर्णनम्
षष्ठमाङ्के—नायिकाया: प्रणयमानवर्णनं च
सप्तमाङ्के—राजपुरोहितेन सह कञ्चुकिकुञ्जयो: संवादेन अन्त:पुर वृतान्तोऽयं व्रज नलेन परिज्ञात: ।

Such a detailed notice of this *ms* is not there in Jayaswal's *catalogue*. Jāyaswal's *catalogue* has—

End— ––प्रभा––संसभ्रमसुत्थाय प्रणमति इतरेपि यथोचितमाचरन्ति ।
नारद—सानन्दं कुमार प्रद्युम्न: भूय: प्रियं
कुमा––अञ्जलिम्बध्वा भगवन् किमपरंयस्य––

Prabhāvatīpariṇaya is a successful drama in seven acts. Prabhāvatī develops soft corner for Pradyumna and the latter also feels for the former. It is the image of Prabhāvatī that impresses Pradyumna. Then there is a description of the *Pūrvarāga* and the wandering of Pradyumna in disguise. The description of garden, evening and other natural scene is simply superb. Like all other dramas of the period, the present drama represents a love story though the style is usual.

(16) *Kṛṣṇadatta Maithila*[1]

In the long list of dramatists in Mithilā, Kṛṣṇadatta is one of the loftiest names, who wrote two allegorical *nāṭakas*. He was a well-known scholar of his time. He was the son of Saḍārāna and Ānanda Devi. He hailed from one of the respectable families of Mithilā. He had superb scholarly qualities. His genius attracted the notice of Devaji Purushottam, the prime minister of the Bhonslās of Nāgpur, who was probably his patron. His two well-known dramas are *Purañjanacharita*[2] and *Kubalayāṣvīyannāmanāṭakam.*[3]

His genius of writing allegorical dramas in lyrical style reminds one of Kālidāsa, Bāṇa, Kṛṣṇamiśra, Jayadeva and others. The *Purañjanacharita* relates the story of Purañjana of the *Bhāgawatapurāṇa*,[4] though a few new

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[1] For details see my paper '*Kṛṣṇadatta Maithila and his works*' in the *JBRS*. XLII. Pt. 2.
[2] Edited by Miss Nilam Solānki. The edition is defective. See my above article.
[3] Jayaswal—*Catalogue*, p. 33, No. 32; Mitra—*Notices*, VI. 64
[4] Cf. *Bhāgawata*, 4. 25; 25, 26, 28

characters have been brought in. The author here extols the cult of *Bhakti* through this drama, the object of which is to promote devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa. In his description of the *Daśāvatāra* of Viṣṇu, one is reminded of the marvellous poetic style of Jayadeva.

The *Purañjanacharita*[1] is a short drama in five acts. It is said to have been staged in the court of Puruṣottamadeva. This drama is published. Since the edition is based on a single manuscript, the following amendments, on the basis of a second *ms*, are necessary. Changes are to be made on pp. 3, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 19, 20, 24, 26, 30.

On page 24, the following śloka is not there in the printed text[2] :—

रक्ताक्षोमलिनः पिको मधुरया वाचा वरं लाध्यतेऽ
मेध्याशी कटुभाषणोऽपि सुकृताख्यानेन काकोच्यते ।
सुश्लाध्यो नवलक्षणाप्रणयनादत्यन्तदुष्टोऽप्यसा—
वेकः कोऽपि गुणो विलक्षणतरः स्यात् सर्वदोषापहः ।

The second drama *Kubalayāśviyannāmanāṭakaṃ* is an important contribution of Kṛṣṇadatta. The story is based on the *Brahmapurāṇa*. It deals with the story of a Vedic student named Kubalayāśva who fell in love with a maiden named Madālasā. The maiden is carried away to the nether regions, whence she is rescued by a king of Kāśi and restored to her lover. Though an entertaining farce, this drama, in seven acts, relates the romantic tale of Madālasā and Sāndrakutuhal. Like other dramatists, he also based his accounts on the *Purāṇas*. This drama is unpublished and a short account of it is given below :

R. L. Mitra—*Notices*—VII—P. 64—*Ms* No. 2035.

(A copy of this drama is deposited in the *Bihar Research Society* Library, Patna)

Beginning—

भालप्रज्ज्वलदक्षिकैतवसतीविश्लेषवैश्वानर––
ज्वालावर्तितसौरसैन्धवपयः फेनैकलेखेव या ।
सा गौरी मिलने पुनः पुररिपोः प्रेमप्रदीपे रसं
दातुं शुक्तिरुपाहितेव कलिता चान्द्रीकला पातु वः ।

(Only first two lines tally with the *ms*. noticed by Jayaswal—*Catalogue*—II. 33. No. 32). There is a different reading altogether in the last two lines.

अपिच—श्रुत्वा दक्षादलीकं प्रिय कलुषमतिव्यस्तया सद्य एव, त्यक्ते सत्या स्वदेहे प्रभुरपि न वधूं स्वीचकारापरां यः । (पराम्बा in Jayaswal) तामेव प्राप्य भूयो नगजननमितामर्द्धनारीश्वरोऽभूत्––(after भूयो धरवर-तनयामर्धं––in Jayaswal) सप्रेमाद्वैतवादी कलयतु भवतामृद्धिमद्वैन्दुमौलिः ।

[1] Mitra—*Notices*, VI. 20, *mss*. No. 2000.; another *ms*. is said to be in possession of Pt. Jivānand Ṭhākur of Raj Library, Darbhanga.

[2] See my paper referred to above.

नान्द्यन्ते सूत्रधारः—अलमति विस्तरेण। पुरोऽवलोक्य। कथमयमुदित एव मधुसमयं हितसमुदितमदनमालवकामिनीकापालफलककोमलकमनीयकंडलः कनक-कुण्डलमाखण्ड.........अखिलजगदानन्दकन्दलश्चन्द्रस्तमेन मम्युदीयमानमह-मभ्यर्थये......

We get the name of Kṛṣṇadatta in the beginning of the drama. There is a difference of reading in the *end* in the *ms* noticed by R. L. Mitra and another by Jayaswal. The description about the various acts in the drama is given here from Mitra's *Notices*.

प्रथमांके—काशीराज प्रतीहारयोरभिनयेन प्रजानां सौख्यवर्णनं। अत्रान्तरे भरद्वाजस्यं ऋषेरादेशज्ञापनार्थं सोमशर्मणः प्रावेशिकी ध्रुवा। ततश्चैकेन शिष्येण कुवलयनामात्तनमश्च मनकर्षतानगम्यमानस्यापरेण च दत्त हस्तावलम्बस्य महर्षेर्गालवस्य प्रवेशेन पातालाधिवासिनः पाताल-केतोस्तपोवनोपरोधसूचनं......

द्वितीयाङ्के—समिदाहरणाय नियुक्तस्य पुण्यशीलस्य प्राभातिकतपोवनरमणीयतां वर्णयतो वात्स्यायनेन सह संलापेन विश्वावसोर्गन्धर्व्वराजस्यापहृत्य कुमारी नाम्ना मदालसा समानीता पातालपुरं पातालकेतुनेति सूचनं। कंकालककरालकयोः प्रवेशेन कुमारप्रभाबवर्णनं, मध्याह्नवर्णनञ्च। अथ कंकालकेन वन्यजनकृषिकौशलप्रदर्शनव्याजेन तपोवनप्रान्तदेशं समानीतौऽसौ कुमारः सान्ध्यसौन्दर्यदर्शनसुखमनुभवन्नेव शूकर रुपेण समुपस्थितं पातालकेतुमुद्दिश्य निष्क्रान्त इति।

तृतीयाङ्के—मन्दारिका-वृन्दारिकयोः संवादेन मदालसायाः कातर्य्यादिवर्णनं। मदालसायाः प्रवृत्तिमाकलयितुं पातालमुद्दिश्य प्रचलितायाः कुण्डलायाः कुवलयाश्वेन सह संलापकथनं। ......मदालसाया वैचित्र्यवर्णनं...... परिणयवर्णनञ्च।

चतुर्थांके—......काशीराजस्य कुमारकृतपातालकेतुविजयादिवृतान्तश्रवणमहोत्सवं......

पंचमांके—विश्वेश्वरस्य मन्दिरप्रवेशसूचनं........मदालसया उत्स्वप्नायितं.......

षष्ठांके—युवराजप्राणत्यागवार्ता......

सप्तमांके—नागकुमारयोरभिनयेन प्रियाविरहविधुरस्य कुवलयाश्वस्य परि-देवनादिकीर्तनं। वटुवेशधारिभ्यां ताभ्यां सह तस्य नागलोकगमन सूचना। अथ विमनाभिताय तस्मै नागराजस्य मायामदालसाप्रदर्शनं। नागराजप्रभावात् तस्य प्रकृतमदालसा सम्मेलनं।

Both these dramas are in Sanskrit and probably that is the reason why Dr. J. K. Miśra has not cared to mention Kṛṣṇadatta in his *History of Maithilī literature*. These two works are invaluable contributions to the store house of Sanskrit literature. It is evident that the classical Sanskrit even inspired the writers in so late a period and held the field. Various other works are ascribed to Kṛṣṇadatta Maithila. He is said to have written a commentary on the *Gītagovinda*[1] of Jayadeva, known as the *Gaṅgāgita-*

[1] Jayaswal—*Catalogue* II, 46, No. 42. The *end* of the *ms*.
"देशानां मौलिरत्नं विभवति मिथिला कौशिकी जह्नु कन्या।
गण्डक्यद्रीन्द्रपादस्थिर रुचिरतरः सीमकीर्तिप्रशस्तिः।

govindavyākhyā. Another commentary on the same work is known as *Gaṅgā* (vide—Jayaswal—*op. cit*—p. 46—No. 42, A). It is said that Kṛṣṇadatta received a village, as a grant, from the king of Nepāl.[1] Another commentary on the same work by Kṛṣṇadatta is known as *Śaśilekhā*.[2] Two mss of this commentary have been noticed, one at Sukhpur (Saharsa) and the other at Saurāṭh (Darbhanga). It seems that Śrī Singh[3] has confused our author with Kṛṣṇadatta Upādhyāya. According to the learned scholar, Kṛṣṇadatta Upādhyāya is known for several works, *viz.*, *Gītagopīpati* and *Chandrikācharita*, a commentary on the *Gītagovinda*, called *Śaśilekhā*.[4] Though we cannot be sure of all these ascriptions to this man, in the present state of our knowledge, we can say with some amount of certainty that our author was a great scholar of Sanskrit and dramatist.[5]

(17) *Devakīnandana*

The *Jānakīpariṇaya* (unpublished) is another contribution of Mithilā towards the development of Sanskrit drama. This *nāṭaka* was composed by Devakīnandan (? *or* Mukunda). It is deposited in the Rāj Library. The authorship of the drama cannot be definitely ascertained. From the *ms*, it appears that Mukunda was probably the author of this drama. The *ms* is in Maithili character and is in 24 pages. There are *six* to *ten* lines in a page. It is written on loose papers. It is in a good state of preservation, complete and correct. The date is missing. ॐ नमस्तस्यै is written on each page.

Beginning— नमश्शिवाय ।।

नृत्यारम्भे दधानोऽमृतकायशकलं मस्तके मंजुभूषां
भालव्यासक्तवह्निस्सुरुचिररुधिरारक्तकीर्ति वसानः ।।
भ्राम्यत्......कुलेन्दुस्खलदमृतरसप्राप्तदेहा......
.....द्रवासानग्नामग्नो विभूत्यै सहसित गिरिजः

श्री विद्यापुण्यसिद्धिश्रियमिव दधती श्रीनदीं वाग्मतीं च ।
स्वाङ्कस्यायन्निवासाभिजनभरतयाः मैथिलाः स्मः प्रसिद्दाः ।।
स्वेऽभिन्नरूपावपि भिन्नवत्स्थितौ सितासिताभौ जगदेकपावनौ ।
वृषाकपायीसहितौ वृषाकपी प्रीतौ भवेतां मम गङ्गयानया ।
मातापुण्ययशस्वती भगवती देवी भवेशः पिता
सन्तो यस्य पुरन्दरः कुलपतिः श्रीमानिकण्ठात्मजः ।
तेने मैथिलकृष्णदत्तकविना तेनेह गंगाभिधा,
टीकाया लहरी समाप्तिमगमत्तस्यामियं द्वादशी ।।

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 47 for details

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 161, No. 157 रचयति शशिलेखां मैथिलः (कृष्णदत्तः)
The colophon gives the name of the commentator.

[3] *History of Tirhut*, p. 145.

[4] *Ibid.* In *Gītagopīpati* Kṛṣṇadatta says—
मौथिलकृष्णभणितमितिमाधवचरणयुगमुपनीतम् ।
सखि हे कृष्णमनुपमभासम् ।।

[5] Krishnamachariar—*op. cit.*, p. 661.

पातु वो नृत्यति ।।१।। वर्द्धित धनजन
सुखित सुकविगण विद्या वितरण.....भवभय
सुहरण। सुनमित सुरगण शरणपते।
लम्बोदर वुधवर गजमुखशावकरज......
.....जय जय आशुगते।। नान्द्यते
सूत्रधारः।......

End— अत्राशेषार्थगीतैर्नृत्यन्ति मुहुरभिवादयन्तीः
सहसा श्री हनुमान् नाटकं नृत्यादिकं। बहुला
दृष्टवातोऽपि सदस्या सुरसिक्ताः सर्वत्र मैथिलाः
नापठ्य व्यवहार चमत्कारान्नवगम्याति प्रसन्ना
प्रसन्नतमाश्चन्चुः।......

The drama is in four acts and deals with the *pariṇaya* of Jānakī. The *ms* is said to have been made ready during the reign of Mahārāja Maheśwara Singh (*c.* 19th century). The author belonged to the 18th century.

(18) *Lālakavi*

Lālakavi[1] wrote the *Gaurīśvayambara* and possibly this is also known as the *Gaurīpariṇaya.* The drama was composed in praise of Lord Śiva as will be evident from the following lines:

सूत्रधारः—जगदखण्डमण्डल विरुद्धं दुरितान्धकारि
विसरख प्रचण्ड मार्तण्यस्याहिमगिरि नन्दिनी
वदनसरससारसमकरन्दास्वादन तदमानो
मिलिन्दस्य करुणा पारावारस्य भगवतः
श्री विश्वेश्वरस्य सरस पदपंकज परायण
मुद्दिस्य ज्योतिर्व्विद कवि लालेन
श्री गौरीस्वयम्वर नाटकमस्ति।

This Lālakavi is possibly the same as the author of "*Kandarpīghat Kā Larāi.*" He flourished during the reign of Mahārāja Narendrasiṁha (18th century). Here we find a complete departure from the traditional convention of mixed languages. Prākṛit and Sanskrit forms are rare here. It is a short play of one act depicting the story of Gaurī's marriage with Śiva.

(19) *Ramāpati Upādhyāya*

Ramāpati flourished in the 18th century. His famous drama is known as *Rukmiṇīharaṇa* (or *Rukmiṇīśvayambara*). The story of this drama is based on the *Harivaṁśa* (47.60) and the *Bhāgawatapurāṇa* (X. 52; 54). The play is in mixed languages and has got six acts. It is a very interesting drama where Śiva has been painted as the lord of *Nṛtya* (or Dance). Generally the *Harivaṁśa* tradition has been followed here with slight variations. In

[1] There have been two *Lālakavis* in Mithilā

act I, it is decided to hold a *Svayaṁbara* for Rukmiṇī. In act II, Kṛṣṇa and Śiśupāla are proposed as grooms. When Rukmiṇī speaks against Kṛṣṇa for his association with the *Gopīs*, the king defends Kṛṣṇa in the following words.

गोपास्ते दिव्यदेहाः सुकृत वहुयुतोनन्दगोपः प्रजेशो ।
गोप्यस्ताश्चापसरोऽशाव्र (द्व्र) ज भूवि जनतादेव राजानुमत्या ।।
कंसोऽरिष्टश्च दैत्यः कपट धृत तनुष्पूतना वालहृन्त्री ।
येस्मिन्दोषास्त्वयोक्तास्त्रिभुवनमहिते माधवे ते गुणास्युः ।।

Ultimately it was decided to hold a *Svayaṁbara*. In act III, when the messenger delivers an invitation to Kṛṣṇa, he appears. There is nothing remarkable in act IV. Again in act V, Kṛṣṇa's diplomatic behaviour makes Rukmiṇī uneasy. Then Nārada appears and advises Kṛṣṇa to elope Rukmiṇī. The whole thing became known. The situation was not tolerated by the *Yuvarāja* and there begins a fight with Kṛṣṇa. In conformity with the tradition of Sanskrit drama, the actual fight is not shown, but described. On the whole, it is a successful drama though the vigour of the classical age is wanting. Besides the dramatic qualities of this play, the most important point, here, is the concept of Indian nationalism preserved in a song; in connection with the *Svayambara* of Rukmiṇī. It is interesting to find out that as late as the 18th century, when India was torn by internal strifes, the concept of India as a whole was not forgotten. An ordinary dramatist has given a description of this vast country in the following manner.[1]

हे द्विज करिअ हमर उपकार ।
ई सबें **जनपद** तोरित गमन कए न्योंतिअ भूप कुमार ।। ध्रुवम् ।।

अंग, वंग, गुजरात, ओइरसा कस्तर **कच्छ कलिङ्ग**
द्राविड़, मरहट, केरल, सोरठ, कारनाट तैलङ्ग ।।

देश **रतनपुर** अओर **नागपुर मालव कटक असाम**
देओगढ़ गाढ़ा नगरी बाढ़ा **राजमहल** सुखधाम ।।

मगह मलापुर अओर **भोजपुर** देश सरै सवेसार
वेतिया वासी नगरी **कासी** जे थिक त्रिभुवन क सार ।।

अन्तरवेग (?) प्रयाग मनोहर **मथुरा** गुण क निधान
अओध कनओज नगर **कुम्मचिल** ओएल के नहिं जान ।।

नगरकोट श्रीनगर उजागर **मोरंग चीन नेपाल**
मारुआर हस्तिनापुर **जयपुर पाटलिपुर** सुविशाल ।।

मध्यभूमि **मिथिला** अति सुन्दर जनक महीपति देस
आगम निगम पुराण विवेचन द्विजगण करि अवधान
रुकुमिनि कुमरि स्वयम्बर कारने सुमति रमापति मान ।।

[1] The drama is unpublished. Quotations, in this connections, have been taken from Dr. J. K. Miśra's *History of Maithilī literature,*"

(20) *Harṣanātha*

Harṣanātha[1] was an important dramatist of Mithilā. He flourished in the 19th century. He wrote *Uṣāharaṇanāṭaka* in mixed Sanskrit and Maithilī. It is a published work and deals with the conventional story. His Maithilī lyrics are marvellous. His another important work is *Mādhavānandanāṭaka* in five acts. The plot of *Uṣāharaṇa* is more or less the same as of Ratnapāṇi's drama of the same name, though there is a slight difference in the sense that Chitralekhā does not seek Nārada's help here. *Uṣāharaṇa* is in five acts. The author indulges in erotic songs in act III. *Mādhavānanda* is based on the *Bhāgawata*. The treatment of the subject matter in the drama is graceful.

(21) *Gokulanātha Upādhyāya*

Gokulanātha is one of the most renowned dramatists of Mithilā. Following the footsteps of Kṛṣṇamiśra and Kṛṣṇadatta, Gokulanātha succeeded in bringing a successful allegorical drama. He has expounded therein the *Nyāya* system of philosophy. The *Amṛtodayanāṭaka* is in five acts. The language is Sanskrit and Prākṛit. It begins with the *Nāṇdīpāṭha* and then the Sūtradhāra appears. There are three ślokas in the *Nāṇdī*. The *Prastāvanā* is as follows—

इति साधन चतुष्टय संघतिनाम प्रस्तावना—

Act I—is called श्रवणसम्पति—There appear आन्वीक्षकी and श्रुति:—

Act II—is called मननसिद्धि:—Here we find कंचुकी, चेटी, मिश्र विष्कम्भक, कथा, पक्षता विदूषक and परामर्ष:—

Act III—is called निदिध्यासनधर्मसंयत्—Here we come across निर्वेद and श्रद्धा, विविदिषा, विष्कम्भक, पतञ्जलि, महाव्रत, कापलिक, जावालि: and निर्जर:—

Act IV—is called तुरीयोऽयमात्मदर्शनं—पुरुष and पुरुषोत्तम appear here.

Act V—is called अपवर्गप्रतिष्ठा—It begins with श्रुति: and आन्वीक्षकी and there are many others here—बुद्धमार्ग, मार्ग, आत्म सिद्धान्त, अर्हं सिद्धान्त, सिद्धान्त, पाशुपतसिद्धान्त, वैष्णवसिद्धान्त, कर्मकाण्ड:, मीमांसाद्वयम्, ब्रह्मविद्या, सांख्ययोगौ, अपवर्ग and सरस्वती।

Though a very small play, almost all the important points of Indian philosophy have been touched here with success. The author seems to have been well conversant with different systems of thought. Even as late as the 18th-19th century of our era, the antipathy towards Buddhism, Jainism, Kāpālikas and other heretical sects was marked and in this direction Gokulanātha was only following conservative tradition of Mithilā. Buddhism and other heretical sects were no problems in his days. The reference to these sects is only casual in so far as the reputation of their views is concerned. No other importance should be attached to these

[1] For details see *Harṣanātha Granthāvalī* edited by Dr. Amaranātha Jhā.

causal references. There is no room for any doubt that he wrote this drama simply to establish the claim and assert the superiority of *Nyāya* system over others and thereby to put off the views of the heretical sects. The *Amṛtodaya* treats the story of *Jivātmā* from creation to annihilation.[1]

It is said that at the instance of Fateh[2] Shāh, Gokulanātha composed *Ekāvalī*. Besides a gloss of the *Kāvyaprakāśa* and the poem *Śivastuti*, he also wrote a drama, entitled *Muditamadālasā*, in seven acts. It deals with the marriage of Madālasā, daughter of Viśvavasu and Kubalayaśva. He was an eminent writer on Smṛti and wrote about 24 books on the subject. He is said to have founded an image of Gaurī-digaṁbara at Hājīpur.

Miscellaneous

There are many more dramas about which we have little or practically no information for the present. Even Jayaswal's *list* is not complete. Though no technical literature on dramaturgy was written in Mithilā after Abhinavagupta, the dramas continued to be written throughout. These dramas are not without merit. The dramatic literature, to a great extent, dominated the field of Sanskrit learning. Even when dramaturgy was ignored, dramas were written and staged. Only one book of importance in the field of dramaturgy merits notice here and that is the *Śrīhastamuktāvalī* of Śubhaṅkara Ṭhākur. It is an *Abhinaya* work and deals with the different poses of hands and figures. It is based on other older works of dramaturgy. A commentary on it was written in 1675 A.D.[3]

The *Jayaratnākara*, by Śaktiballabha, was written in 1714 Śaka for the Nepāl King Raṇabahādura Shāh, *parvatachakravartin*. The drama deals with the history of the dynasty.[4] The *Mahānāṭakaṁ* by Hanumān deals with Rāmachorita. The date in all the available manuscripts is missing. It is said to have been compiled by one Madhusūdhana Miśra. (Vide Jayaswal—op. cit. pp. 110-11, Nos. 106, 107, 108; *CC* 1.438; II. 100, 216; *Notices*—V. 27). There is another drama entitled *Rāmacharitravarṇana* by Hanumāna (Jayaswal—op. cit. pp. 133-4, Nos. 130 & A). The *Prabhāvatīharaṇa*, a published drama in four acts, of Bhānunāth is another milestone in the history of Sanskrit literature in Mithila. The *Śaśikalāpariṇaya* was composed in five acts in the second quarter of our century. It was published by the Rāja press, Darbhanga. The author, Śrī Riddhinātha Jhā, has used only Sanskrit.

1 Krishnamachariar—*op. cit.* 655. *Amṛtodaya* illustrates the ills of *Samsāra*. Even this dramatist does not find a place in the *History of Maithili literarure* possibly because he wrote in pure Sanskrit. We do not know anything definitely about him. He is said to have belonged to Mangrouni (Darbhanga). He was the son of Umādevi and Pitāmbara. He was a versatile genius. He flourishsed in the 18th-19th century. He is associated with the court of Mahārāja Rāghava Simha of Darbhanga.

2 He was a ruler of Garhwāla. For *Amṛtodaya*, see *Nepāl Catalogue* I. 47. For *Ekāvalī* see Jayaswal, *Catalogue*. II., p. 1, No. 1

3 H. P. Śāstri. *Catalogue of Nepāl mss.*, p. 272. For *Śrīhastamuktāvalī* cf. Jawaswal *Catalogue* II, p. 170, No. 165.

4 Jayaswal, *op. cit.* p. 63, No. 60

The *Gajānanacharita*[1] by Śivanandana Miśra is yet to be published. It is written in Maithilī character on a white brown paper in a book form. There are in all 25 folios with lines 12 to 14 on each page. The drama is in seven acts. The date is mentioned. It deals with the *Vīrarasa*.

Beginning— गजाननचरितम्
कान्याम्भोदपनिद्ध पंकज वनानन्दाभयो लम्बितम् ।
विष्वक्स्रंस जटाकलापविहितम्बिभ्राणामीशालम् ।
अन्तः स्नेहविनीतशैलसुतया साकूतमालोकितम् ।
सान्दानन्दनिकामजातपुलकं पायादपायाद् ध्रुवम् ।

In the Nāndīsūtra it refers to one Netreśwara Siṁha and Janeśwar Siṁha.

End— लोका धर्म्मरतास्सन्तु काले वर्षन्तु तोयदाः
शाल्यैः पुर्णास्तु पृथ्वी नित्योत्सवरताः प्रजाः ।

Thus, a brief survey of the dramas, given above, shows that the tradition of writing Sanskrit dramas continued unabated as late as our own century. There are various other authors whose works have not yet come to light. The *Mithilāñka* has catalogued a long list of dramatists. A short account of the Sanskrit dramatists of Mithilā has been published by Śrī Umākānta Ṭhākur in the *Vaidehi Viseṣāñka* of 1957. In this connection, Raghunandana-dāsa's "*Mithilānāṭaka*" also deserves mention. The unbroken continuity of Sanskrit literature in Mithilā is well illustrated by these facts. *A critical literary evaluation of all these dramas is yet a desideratum.*

Besides the list, given above, the Maithila scholars claim Kālidāsa, Rājasekhara, Bhababhūti and Jayadeva and others of repute as their own. To me, it seems that these claims are baseless. There have been various authors of the same name and that probably is responsible for such identification. Whether or not these dramatists and poets belonged to Mithilā, the fact remains that they are our national poets and their heritage is ours. The study of their works was pursued with same sincerity of purpose as of any other Maithila scholar here and that is evident from the number of commentaries written thereon in Mithilā. It is futile to fight over the question of their nationality.

SANSKRIT DRAMATISTS OF MITHILĀ

Serial No.	*Name of the author*	*Approximate Date*	*Works*	*Remarks*
(1)	Murāri Miśra	9th century A.D.	*Anargharāghava*	*Published*
(2)	Kṛṣṇa Miśra	11th cent. A.D.	*Prabodhachandrodaya*	*Do*
(3)	Abhinavagupta	11-12th cent. A.D.	Wrote a commentary on *Nāṭyaśāstra*	

[1] It is in possession of Śrî Dhīrānanda Śarma of the Mithilā Research Institute, Darbhanga.

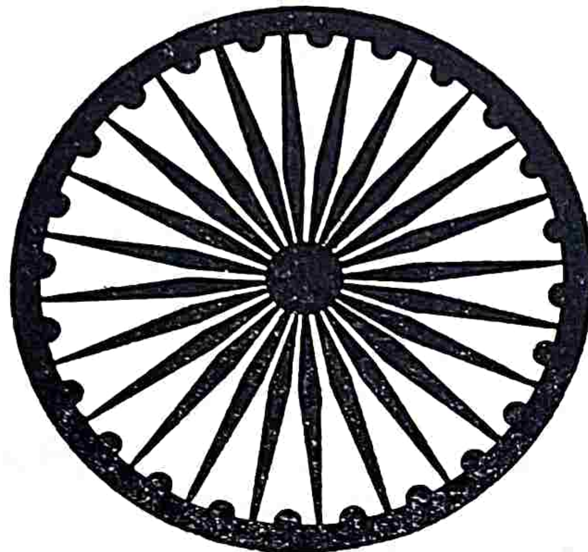
Serial No.	*Nvme of the author*	*Approximate Date*	*Works*	*Remarks*
(4)	Jyotirīśwara Ṭhākura	14th cent. A.D.	*Dhūrtasamāgama*	*Published in lithograph*
(5)	Umāpati	Do	*Pārijātaharaṇa*	*Published*
(6)	Maṇika	Do	*Bhairavānandanāṭaka*	*Unpublished*
(7)	Vidyāpati Ṭhākura	Do	(*a*) *Gorakṣavijaya* (*b*) *Maṇimañjarī*	*Do*
(8)	Jayadeva Miśra	15th century	*Prasannarāghava*	*Published*
(9)	Bāṇakavi	Do	*Pārvatīpariṇaya*	(?)
(10)	Śaṅkara Miśra	Do	(*a*) *Śrī Kṛṣṇavinoda-nāṭaka* (*b*) *Manobhava-parābhava*	*Unpublished*
(11)	Devānanda	16th century	*Uṣāharaṇanāṭaka*	(?)
(12)	Govinda Jhā	17th century	(*a*) *Nalacharita* (*b*) *Kṛṣṇacharita*	*Unpublished*
(13)	Vaṁśamaṇi Jhā	Do	*Gītadigambara*	*Do*
(14)	Rāmadāsa Jhā	Do	*Ānandavijayanāṭaka*	*Published*
(15)	Hariharopādhyāya	18th century	(*a*) *Bhartṛharinirveda* (*b*) *Prabhāvatipariṇaya*	*Do* *Unpublished*
(16)	Kṛṣṇadatta Maithila	Do	(*a*) *Purañjanacharita* (*b*) *Kuvalayāśviyanāṭaka*	*Published* *Unpublished*
(17)	Devakinandana	Do	*Jānkīpariṇaya*	*Do*
(18)	Lālakavi	Do	(*a*) *Gaurīspariṇaya* (*b*) *Gaurīsvayambara*	*Do* (?) *Do*
(19)	Ramāpati	Do	*Rukmiṇīsvayaṁbara*	*Do*
(20)	Harṣanātha	19th century	*Uṣāharaṇa* (*b*) *Mādhavānanda*	*Published*
(21)	Gokulanāth	Do	*Amṛtodaya*	(?)

ABBREVIATIONS USED:

C-C.—Catalogus Cotalogorum
GOS—Gaokwad Oriental Series
AR—Anargharāghava
PR—Prasannarāghava
PC—Prabodhachandrodaya
HML—History of Maithilī Literature
PH—Pārijātaharaṇa
DS—Dhūrtasamāgama
JDL—Journal of the Department of Letters
BN—Bhartṛharinirveda
JASB—Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal

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